RAGGED SCHOOL UNION QUARTERLY RECORD.

JULY, 1881.

LORD SHAFTESBURY'S EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY.

The appropriate celebration of this auspicious event at the Guildhall on the 28th April has been so fully and adequately reported by the Ragged School Union, and will in a few days be published in a convenient form and at a price accessible to all, that little remains to be done here. I cannot, however, refrain from quoting the able and genial article contributed to the *Evangelical Magazine* by the Rev. Baldwin Brown. He says:—

"Of all the meetings which have been held in London of late, is there any that can rival in interest the concourse which gathered in and around the Guildhall of London on the 28th April to do honour to Lord Shaftesbury on his eightieth birthday; and in honouring him to honour themselves, and the God whose work of mercy in the world he has so nobly done? In and around Guildhall, we say advisedly, for while the noble and the wise, Cabinet Ministers, members of Parliament, ministers of the Gospel, and notable merchants assembled within the building, under the presidency of the Lord Mayor, perhaps to those who look beneath the surface of things there was something more impressive, more touching, more charged with beautiful meaning in the flower girls, the costermongers, and the Ragged School children, who thronged the space outside. Inside the building they met to celebrate Lord Shaftesbury's virtues and to rehearse his deeds; outside they came to bless him for the way in which lifelong he had toiled for them, and the light which he had brought into their lives. And weighty as were the words which were spoken in the Guildhall by men of the first eminence in the State, perhaps the 'blessing of the poor, and of him that was ready to perish,' which rose from many a heart outside, in the estimation of heaven outweighed them all."

The following tributes in verse, as expressive of genuine feeling, will gratify many. The acrostic was contributed by one who was formerly a poor carpenter boy.

LORD SHAFTESBURY'S BIRTHDAY.

(*By an Invalid-Absentee.*)

Deprived of power to meet the poor man's friend,
My humble offering of Love I send,
To greet—now eighty years have passed away—
The hero of a glorious Natal Day!

* * * * *

Born for his country, bred for his country's weal,
He lived and lives to know, to prove, to feel,
That none inherit greatness from their birth
Who fail to do their Master's work on earth:
How he hath done this work the poor may show,
Although the worker shall hereafter know;
And when, at length, with Christian banner furled,
The Peer is summoned to a better world,
Saved "Ragged Children" robed in new attire
Will welcome to their home their earthly sire.

* * * * *

But yet on earth may Heaven preserve that sage,
Whose portrait now, at eighty years of age,
Conveys a proof from workers of his time
Of love by godly labour made Divine.

* * * * *

The greatest picture by this world possessed
Is that which animates the Christian breast:
A vital work beyond pictorial art,—
Our Saviour's living Image in the heart.

FRANK FOSTER.

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, K.G.,

On his Lordship's Eightieth Birthday, April 28th, 1881.

A veteran in the holy war,
A captain of the host,
How shall we his true picture draw
For those who love him most?

In life's first days his path was planned,
To aid the worn and weak,
To help the helpless of the land,
And wrongs' redress to seek.

That path his feet have firmly kept
From manhood on to age,
To soothe the sighs of those who wept,
And human grief assuage.

The echo of his honoured name
The toiling millions bless,
And never will his well-earned fame
By lapse of time grow less.

From manhood's dawn to evening hour,
A workman tried and true,
Devoting health, and wealth, and power,
Each worthy work to do.

The ragged children found a friend
To help them in their need,
Their cause to argue and defend,
Its urgency to plead.

The sons of toil, the factory child,
In him their champion saw,
What time by burdens over-piled
He brought them under law.

The Bible, Missions, Church, and Crown,
His loving labours shared,
And he hath won a rich renown,
For what he did and dared.

And now we gather round him here,
Where London's Lord hath sway,
And in a glad acclaiming cheer
Hail Shaftesbury's natal day!

May Heaven's best blessing on him rest,
And peace his guerdon be,
Who early heard his Lord's behest
To set the fettered free.

Highgate, April, 1881. W. J. H. Y.

INCENTIVE ACROSTIC.

Respectfully inscribed to the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., &c., &c., on his attaining his Eightieth Birthday, April 28th, 1881.

By P. GABBITASS, Clifton, Author of the "Blind Boy," graciously accepted by Her Majesty the Queen.

T o one we love for Christian zeal, on this auspicious day
O f birthday cheer, with heart sincere, is sent this greeting lay.

T ime flies! Yet finds him at his post, employed as heretofore,
H is labours for his Master, Christ, are treasured more and more;
E ach closing day he finds a stage of pleasant duty run,

R eminded that the night will come, when man's work will be done.
I n years gone by 'tis known and well, his toiling was for good,
G od gifted for a special work, that now is understood;
H is talents have been well employed, his wealth, his time, and pen,
T hat peace and right might dwell on earth, and goodwill among men.

How blest a life thus nobly spent, what pleasure to the mind
Outflowing from his love to God, and all the human kind.
No form of woe but his large heart sought out for it relief,
Outcasts and city Arabs found in him a friend for grief;
Unsparing of his time and care, his faith by works did show
Right evidence of Jesu's love, who cared for man below.
And when the good Old Book was found to be the world's great need,
Beyond the pale of his own church he for its spread would plead;
Lov'd labour for this Book of books he gave with zeal untold,
Engaged in service so Divine to him was more than gold.

The climbing boys of years gone by will bless his name to-day,
Have grateful heart for him who swept their drudgery away;
Each Ragged and Industrial School that grace our Christian land

Esteem the work that he has done, the labour of his hand.
And on this grand red-letter day will ring from training ships
Right hearty cheers and wishes good from brave young seamen's lips.
Lov'd children, homed in refuges, once sad and desolate,

On his lov'd name to-day will dwell, with mind and heart elate.
Fond mothers, too, in many a cot who laboured once in mines,

Shall name him their "Forget-me-not," his name their heart enshrines;
He who, when in the damp cold pit they had to toiling come,
Assisted them to their right place,—the woman's place, at home.
From Bands of Hope, from rescued waifs, and myriad tongues beside,
There shall this day, as from one heart, joy-wishes come with pride.
Esteem for him the nation feels, who sought not worldly fame,
Staunch in his efforts for its weal, to-day all hail his name.
Blest birthday this to him, who finds the good old sacred page
Upholding him with its sweet truths to cheer his ripe old age;
Remembered he shall be to-day at morn and even prayer,
Yes, thousands whom he lived to bless shall think upon him there.

Kind Heaven grant that when on earth his last birthday shall come,
Good angels from his Father-God may bear his spirit home!

UNDER THE RAGGED BANNER.

An able writer who some years ago gained celebrity by a contribution to a daily journal under the title of an "Amateur Casual" has contributed an article to the *Daily Telegraph* on our work. The occasion was the annual meeting, when the platform was filled by the prize scholars, the banners of their respective schools being tastefully displayed. A reproduction of some of its passages needs no apology.

"The great annual gathering that took place on Monday evening, May 9, at Exeter Hall, was one of a kind most of all gratifying to Lord Shaftesbury, who presided, inasmuch as its purpose was to

celebrate the continued success of an institution having for its prime object to lend a helping hand to destitute and neglected children who, but for the timely assistance, would probably have been lost in the slough in which their misguided feet had already begun to sink. The institute in question is the Ragged School Union, and the occasion was improved by distributing amongst the voluntary teachers engaged at various Ragged Schools in almost every district of the metropolis the book prizes that had been awarded them. The best feature of assemblages of this kind is that they enforce at a glance a conviction of their immeasurable utility. There, closely packed in the great organ gallery, were several hundreds of children, the representatives of thousands who, under the auspices of the Union, have been rescued from the paths of depravity and made wholesome in mind and body. There they sat or stood up and cheerily chaunted the songs included in the programme, and a pleasant sight it must have been for their friends and patrons who filled the body of the hall to note their bright faces and the honest outlook of their eyes, so utterly different from the haggard visage and the sullen scowl or the suspicious rat-like look that characterises the untamed ragamuffin. Nor could there be any doubt as to the localities from which the various squads hailed. There were contingents from the lowest slums in London—from Spitalfields, from Deptford, from Walworth Road, Whitechapel, from Old Pye Street, Westminster, each division having its own flag on which the name of the school was tastefully emblazoned. As each name was hoisted aloft a pile of handsome books passed from the hands of Lord Shaftesbury to those deputed to receive them, and there arose a tremendous hand-clapping and cheering from the boys and girls belonging to that school.

"In originally founding Ragged Schools the promoters hit the right nail on the head with a home-driving force and precision that proved them skilled workmen. What they found at starting was thousands of the children of the lowest and most ignorant classes springing up in our midst, sturdy of growth as weeds in a wheatfield, and, like the latter, gaining daily increase of strength at the expense of the honest grain. Swarms of uncared-for, tattered urchins swarmed the streets as ownerless kennel curs used to do before a dogs' home was established, and with pretty much the same motives—to amuse themselves with gutter gambols, and supplement their meagre home rations of food with anything eatable they might chance to pick up. They haunted the markets, grubbing at offal heaps in Covent Garden and Farringdon in search of cast-out, decaying fruit and stale vegetables, and their prowlings were a severe tax on the patience and vigilance of the beadles at the meat market. They had no respect

for the high respectability of West End thoroughfares, and fearlessly invaded the very heart of the City, playing "touch" in Threadneedle Street, and making a playground of the open space before the Royal Exchange. They got to be nick-named "City Arabs," and though everybody exclaimed against the abominable nuisance it was nobody's business to interfere.

"There was one way by means of which this deplorable condition of things might be mended. Since it was apparently impracticable to translate the ragamuffin to be dealt with into a boy eligible for admission to a respectable school, the only alternative was to provide for him a school so conveniently on his own level that he might, without any effort at climbing, step into it at once out of the streets, just as he was.

"The Compulsory Act does not include amongst its many virtues the power of subduing young Jack Rag's barbarian spirit and making him content to attend school in his poor apology for a jacket and his gaping old shoes and take his seat in a row with decently-dressed boys with lofty ideas of their superiority to him. The Ragged School question was anxiously discussed by the Union, with Lord Shaftesbury at its head, nine years since. As Lord Shaftesbury pointed out in a circular issued in 1872, the migratory and generally lawless character of the very lowest of the population would, for a time at least, make the labour of elementary education on their behalf by the School Board of London a matter of no small difficulty, and it was therefore resolved that the good work which had been in operation more than a quarter of a century should not be abandoned. Results have amply demonstrated the wisdom of this decision.

"It is much to be regretted that there is scarcely a district in London which does not include among its juvenile population many who, on account of their ragged and unclean state, would be refused admission if they applied to the Board School. There is still the Ragged School for the poor little outcasts. It by no means follows that their education is to begin and end there, but nowhere else can they make a commencement. Nor, it should be borne in mind, do the many score of schools throughout the metropolis to which the Ragged School Union holds out a friendly hand limit the scope of their well-doing to mere day school instruction. As Lord Shaftesbury remarks, "It must never be forgotten that the primary object of these schools is to bring the Gospel to bear on the neglected outcasts of society." *Sunday instruction* is not included in the School Board scheme, but *it is one of the most important features of the Ragged School plan*, which also comprises Night Schools, Children's Services, Penny Banks, Clothing Clubs, Infant Nurseries, Labourers' Clubs, Medical and Gospel

Missions. In the words of the most recently-issued report some idea of the magnitude of the ameliorating work carried on is disclosed by the fact that 160 Schools and Missions are fostered by the Ragged School Union. There is only one shortcoming mentioned in the said report, and that is a financial one. A natural reluctance to curtail the various benefits to which the poor have grown accustomed has led to an indebtedness, divided amongst fifty-four schools, of nearly £2,000."

PROCEEDINGS OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION.

HELD AT EXETER HALL ON MONDAY, MAY 9*th*, 1881.

THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, K.G., PRESIDED.

The Thirty-seventh Anniversary and Distribution of Scholars' Prizes took place on Monday evening, May 9th, at Exeter Hall, which was crammed from end to end, the platform being, as usual on such occasions, almost entirely occupied by children who had been trained in various schools. About 600 old scholars, to whom prizes had been awarded, went through an interesting musical programme, under the skilful direction of Mr. J. Proudman, to the manifest delight of the adults seated on the floor of the hall, as well as those on the platform. The chair was taken at six o'clock by the President, the Earl of SHAFTESBURY, whose reception was more than ordinarily cordial and enthusiastic. On the platform were the Bishop of Rochester, Earl Fortescue, the Rev. Dr. Manning, the Revs. Burman Cassin, R. H. Atherton, J. H. Moran, and Hugh Price Hughes; Mr. Laurence Briant, Mr. Hughesdon (Her Majesty's Consul at Japan), and Mr. W. Haig Miller. Mr. J. G. Gent was precluded from attending by indisposition.

The proceedings opened with the singing by the Meeting of the hymn beginning "Come, let us join our cheerful songs," and the offering of prayer by the Rev. E. B. FRANKEL, of Tunis.

The children sang successively, "Praise my Soul," "Sweet Bells," and "Don't forget the Old Folks."

The SECRETARY (Mr. John Kirk) read an abstract of the Report.

The Committee said a marked feature of Ragged Schools during the year had been the gradual working out of changes and modifications which had long been regarded as inevitable. As an indication of life and growth they were thankful to note 117 new, resumed, or extended operations during the year. The last Report contained an intimation that the Committee had resolved to foster and promote Youths' Institutes, which were gradually in course of formation among the schools, and which were likely to exercise an influence for good upon the older scholars as they emerged into adult life, and similar efforts

under varying terms of Boys' Clubs, Mutual Improvement Societies, Industrial Classes, &c., were in successful operation. There had also been an increased desire on the part of managers to furnish healthful recreation and innocent amusement to the scholars, with a view to counteract the more baneful attractions of the theatre and music-hall. The last year had not been free from financial anxiety. Last summer the Committee had to deal with a deficit at the bankers, and to meet the grants due to the schools it was necessary to draw upon a moderate reserve fund. It was felt, however, that in the nature of things this could not long continue. The regular grants, upon the promise of which liabilities had been incurred, and on which, in some cases, the very existence of the school depended, considerably exceeded the ordinary income of the society. After alluding to the well-known letter of Lord Shaftesbury and other friendly aid, the Committee referred to one gift of £200 and ten of £100, which with other help kindly sent in response to the appeal, enabled them to meet all claims, and to refund the amount withdrawn from the reserve fund. They were also indebted to a colleague on the Committee, through whose kind intervention a legacy of £2,000 was received from the executors of the late Mrs. Susan Gorley, of Dover. The balance-sheet showed receipts, including these exceptional items, of £7,591 as compared with the gross receipts of the previous year of £3,737. Gratifying as it was to see the year's income doubled, the Committee could not forget how much of it was exceptional, and the fact still remained that the ordinary receipts did not meet ordinary expenditure. The year closed with a nominal balance of £90 3s. 10d., but with a real deficit of £147 15s. 4d., as grants were drawn on April 8 for the total sum of £237 19s. 2d. It was a source of deep thankfulness that they have still mercifully preserved to them their Noble President, whose eightieth birthday was recently celebrated so fittingly at the Guildhall. The Committee have the pleasure of reporting a gratifying success in connection with the scheme for augmenting the School Libraries. As notified last year, the Religious Tract Society generously agreed to supply grants of books at half subscribers' prices, and more than 100 schools availed themselves of this privilege. The total attendance at the 188 Sunday Afternoon and Evening Schools was 34,233, being an increase of 670 over the preceding year. The Day Ragged Schools were sustained in separate rooms, with an average allowance of 531 boys and 768 girls, and 3,527 mixed, with 6,250 on the books. Many older children were gathered within the walls of their Day Schools, whose backwardness, low capacity, or irregularity, rendered them ineligible for School Board treatment proving that there were still a number of boys and girls whose penniless and forlorn condition and migratory habits impelled them to seek such refuge as a Ragged School afforded. The difficulty assumed greater dimensions when the children get above school age, and the School Board ceased to have a semblance of power over them; hence the importance the Committee attached to Night Schools for the elder boys and girls. During the year there had

been Night Schools conducted in 157 schools, with an average attendance of 5,626, and 9,141 on the books. The Committee, whilst deeply thankful for what had been done, were again constrained to urge the extension of this Night-School work. The School Board had rather increased than diminished its necessity. The endeavours to promote industry and perseverance had been greatly stimulated by the prizes given for the last 28 years to old scholars between the ages of thirteen and eighteen who had kept their situations with credit for at least twelve months. The number of successful candidates on the present occasion was 607 out of a total of 630 applications received from 61 schools. The prizes awarded to the 244 boys and 363 girls this year consisted in every case of an illuminated card, specially designed by a member of the Committee, and those coming in for the first time received the sum of 7s. 6d. (344), part of which was paid by the local schools. The old scholars coming up for the second, third, fourth, and fifth time received a volume of the *Boy's Own Paper* or of the *Girl's Own Paper*. The Bible Classes were instituted in 62 schools, with a regular attendance of 2,156 scholars. The value of such classes could not be over-estimated, as it was to the Bible Class that they must look for supplies of teachers. That a good many had thus been trained was apparent from the fact that during the past year 322 of the teachers were formerly scholars. The number of scholars who had become communicants at various churches, so far as could be ascertained, returns being made only by 39 schools, was 364. Prayer Meetings had been maintained in 83 schools, with an attendance of 5,025. Religious Services for children were conducted in 85 schools, and were attended by 9,774 children. Gospel Services, or, as they were generally termed, Ragged Churches, were likewise conducted in 84 schools, with an attendance of 8,425. Parents' Meetings were held in 90 schools, with 4,419 in attendance. The number of faithful and loving teachers, men and women, who were found willing to take part in this Christian enterprise had increased during the year from 2,926 to 3,016. The Committee were grateful for this additional assistance. The supply and demand were still painfully disproportionate. If any emphasis were needed for a Macedonian cry for additional help it might be found in the growing disregard for the Sabbath on the part of the youths of both sexes from fourteen years and upwards. These roam our thoroughfares in thousands in the evening of the Lord's Day, with an easy indifference, fast ripening into every form of ungodliness. The Committee rejoiced at the successful efforts put forth on all sides for the mitigation of the evil of drink. The Temperance Meetings held a prominent place in a great number of the schools, and Bands of Hope existed in 75 buildings, with a muster-roll of 6,947 members. Penny Banks were conducted in 82 schools. The number of depositors last year was 22,424. The total amount deposited was £10,331 12s. 6½d. £2,174 3s. remained in balances at Christmas last. The Shoeblack Societies reported that 314 boys had earned £11,564 13s. during the year, with deposits in the bank of £965 7s. 1½d.

There were 43 Clothing Clubs, which had dealt with the sum of £1,823 9s. 5d. There were also many Boot and Shoe Clubs. Infant Nurseries had been established in connection with six schools, and were found to work out most beneficial results. The supply of dinners to indigent children had been extensively continued. At Christmas time dinners and treats were given of an exceptional and festive character. Under the head "Day in the Country" the Committee said: These long-looked-for holidays were organised by most of the local committees, but in some instances there were various obstacles which made that impracticable. The Parent Committee had been wont to gather up these schools, and furnish the holiday, which would not otherwise be enjoyed. The number of schools thus assisted was 19; the number of children about 2,000; teachers in charge, 122; the day Thursday, July 1st. Mr. Curtis, the Organising Secretary, had been enabled to complete his twenty-first year of friendly and useful visitation amongst the schools. He reported 1,050 visits paid during the last year. In concluding the Committee said "they would congratulate the Young Men's Christian Association on the acquisition of Exeter Hall, crowded with memories as it is of every kind of social, benevolent, philanthropic, and Christian enterprise for the past fifty years. Amongst these, few rank more conspicuously than the good cause of Ragged Schools. For thirty-seven years, without intermission, the well-worn platform chair has been occupied by our President at the anniversaries of the Society, and for the same period offices in the building have been used as its head-quarters. During the extensive renovations of the past winter, now happily completed, some interruption to business was experienced, and the Society's offices were removed to the renumbered rooms, Nos. 12 and 13, on the Mezzanine floor of the hall, where they remain."

The children then sang, "How Beautiful the Morning," and "Song of the Monkey."

The prizes were afterwards distributed, the old scholars remaining in their places, while the teachers of the respective schools passed to the chair and received the rewards from the hands of Lord Shaftesbury. The name of each school was displayed to the assembly in front at the instant when the prizes were given. Immediately prior to the ceremony, and by way of preface, a number of girls belonging to the London Flower Girls' Brigade distributed among the gentlemen seated on the platform pretty nosegays which they carried in baskets, and the CHAIRMAN, in acknowledging the present, remarked that those neatly-clad and industrial girls, who had been taken off the streets, filled, according to the season, four different capacities towards the public, being, according to the seasons, watercress girls, flower girls, vegetable girls, and hot-coffee girls. The presentation of prizes occupied nearly twenty minutes, many of the teachers of both sexes being heavily laden with their burden of books, and two or three actually staggering under their load, amid the hearty laughter of all present.

The children then sang, "The Path of the Just," and "The Might with the Right."

The boys and girls taking prizes on this occasion were from the following schools:—Amicable Row, 4; Brewer's Court, 8; Broad Street, 2; Brunswick Street, 4; Butler's Place, 10; Castle Lane, 2; Chequer Alley, 16; Copperfield Road, 24; Croydon, 3; Dartford, 14; Deptford, 7; Devonshire Street, 2; East Greenwich, 6; Emmot Street, 2; Ernest Street, 1; Exeter Buildings, 7; Field Lane, 6; Fox Court, 16; Gee Street, 1; George Yard, 33; Gravesend, 7; Gray's Yard, 5; Grotto Passage, 3; Hatfield Street, 11; Hope Street, 12; Horseferry Road, 5; Johnson's Court, 3; Jurston Street, 17; Kentish Town, 8; King Edward (The), 48; Kingsland, 9; John Street, Shacklewell, 9; Lambeth, 24; Lamb and Flag, 52; Lansdowne Place, 10; Little Coram Street, 1; Little Saffron Hill, 2; Lower Park Road, 5; Marigold Place, 16; Milton's Yard, 5; Morton Road, 23; Nelson Street, 5; New Tothill Street, 12; Ogle Mews, 18; Old Castle Street, 4; Old Pye Street (One Tun), 15; Parker Street, 6; Poplar, 3; Ratcliff, 7; Richmond Street, 7; Robert Street, 7; Rosemary Hall, 24; Rufford's Buildings, 9; St. James's Place, 8; Three Colt Street, 1; Victory Place, 13; Wentworth Street, 1; West Greenwich, 11; Wilkes Street, 7; York Mews, 4.—Total, 607.

The LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER:—My lord and Christian friends, I have the greatest pleasure in moving the following resolution:—

"That the Report, an abstract of which has been read, and the financial statement submitted, be adopted, printed, and published, and that the gentlemen named in the printed list be the Committee for the ensuing year, 1881-82."

My experience of prize distributions is that after the prizes have been given a certain amount of flatness is apt to creep over the proceedings, but in the few words which I have to address to you, I will do my very best to avoid that evil, and to keep as the keynote of this happy and encouraging meeting, what I think ought to be the feeling in all our hearts, that is, unbounded thankfulness to Almighty God. First of all, I do desire myself to thank God for the work which the Ragged School Union is doing in a part of London for the moral and spiritual condition of which I am in a certain degree responsible, I mean the south of London. The Diocese of Rochester extends from Deptford, in the east, to Richmond, in the west, and I am glad to be able to say that there are at least five parishes in the south of London having schools in connection with this most useful and important work. But I want also to say that I cannot feel sufficiently thankful for the sagacity, foresight, and courage which led the Committee of this Union, some ten or eleven years ago, when the School Board for London was first formed, to decline to break up, as they were expected, and recommended to do, this most important organisation, and leave the field open for the operations of the Board. If that had been done, I should like to know what would have become of all those bright and happy faces which I see around me this evening. I am not going to say one single word either against the action of the Government, in reference to elementary education, or against the proceedings of the School Board for London. I believe that we are all

now perfectly convinced that there was, at the period to which I have alluded, no possible chance of postponing school action on a very large scale for the masses of the metropolis—that the voluntary religious bodies, notwithstanding their zealous spirit and persevering efforts, had failed to grapple effectually with the evil to be met, and that it was absolutely necessary that a large scheme should be formed for the solving of the grand educational problem of the time. I think, too, that most of those who are here to-night are perfectly ready to do ample justice to the industry, the courage, the energy, and the painstaking care with which various members of the Board have done their best to accomplish their enormous and difficult task. We have, most of us, had experience of their work in our pockets, and we hope that some good has resulted. I should be the last person to make any sour criticisms on the School Board, because it so happens that I was a member of the first Board, and must have a share of the responsibility for its work with my colleagues. But what I want to say is this—that I thank God that those who were responsible for the management of the Ragged School Union did not, in a moment of despair or of precipitancy, throw up the work, in the expectation that the School Board for London would occupy the ground. Why, at this moment they are not occupying the ground. This is no fault of theirs; they could not do it, or at all events it would take them many years to do it. About six weeks ago I met one of the most intelligent officers of the Board—a man whom I helped to get appointed to his post while I was Vicar of St. Pancras. One of the first things I said to him was, "Well, are you getting the ragged children?" He replied, "No, but we are getting nearer to them." If we have difficulties in keeping children at school, how much greater must be the difficulties of School Board officers! I suppose ragged children are in that respect something like other children; that is, they are not all very fond of going to school, and it is not very difficult for them and their parents combined to elude the efforts of a School Board officer. But, you see, we do manage to get these children, and I hope we shall always manage to get them; and so long as we do get them, while the School Board for London, using their best efforts, cannot get them, so long I hope the Committee of the Union will persevere in their work. Now, I would defy any one to look upon such a gathering as this (pointing to the old scholars on the platform),—I would defy any one to look at the faces of those bright and happy children, for whom you, my friends, and others have done so much, under the blessing of God, without having his heart stirred to its very depths. We who believe that the multitude of souls in this vast metropolis have been bought by the blood of the Son of God, and who know what that blessed Saviour has done for us, must be sustained by His love to feel an interest in the spiritual welfare of poor neglected children, and must rejoice in such a spectacle as is presented this evening; and we must rejoice to see such spiritual forces at work for the evangelising of the heathenism of London. Now, the work of the Rag-

ged School Union may be looked at from two points of view—first, as an educational, and then as an evangelistic work. In the educational work there is of course reading and writing, and the first four rules of arithmetic; but it is clear from what we have heard to-night that there is also instruction in singing. This is the time of year when the nightingales begin, and we have had our nightingales this evening.

Now I think we ought to take great care that the teaching is so good and so solid that the children will really be taught to read, and really be taught to write, and really be taught to sing. I am very glad to find that the system of teaching in connection with this Union is so thoroughly satisfactory, as that it takes out of the lips of those who are opposed to the work what has appeared to many a substantial argument. The children whom I see here this evening appear to have plenty of intelligence, showing how excellent is the teaching which has been bestowed upon them. I would here recommend you who are teachers to be as careful as possible in preparing yourselves to teach, and also not to venture upon ground the difficulties of which you may not be able to grapple with successfully. Prudent teachers will not ask children questions which they could not fairly be expected to answer. Let me here mention an incident which bears on this point. A clergyman having the best possible intentions, but not too much sagacity, asked a boy—I don't know whether or not it was a Ragged School boy—a question which the most erudite divine could hardly have answered. He said, "What is a miracle?" The little boy immediately answered that he did not know. Then the clergyman said, "If you were told that the sun shone in the middle of the night, what should you say?" "I should say," said the little boy, "it was the moon." "Well," said the clergyman; "but if you were told that it was not the moon, but the sun, what should you say then?" "I should say it was a lie," replied the lad. "But," rejoined the clergyman, "if I afterwards told you that it was not the moon but the sun, what should you say then?" "I should say," replied the boy, "you wasn't sober." (Laughter.) Well, now you know that was a shocking little boy; but I should say that there are a great many little boys and little girls who would not have been able to answer that question. I would remind teachers that they cannot expect children to be always on their best behaviour. Even parents sometimes wish that their children did not give them quite so much trouble, and teachers cannot expect that Ragged School children will never give them any trouble. I don't know what you feel on this subject, but the older I grow the more I feel that we must love Ragged School children, and exercise patience in dealing with them, if we are to succeed in our educational wish among them. Let me now say one word, and I shall say it from the depth of my heart, about the evangelistic character of this work. All of you, no doubt, know—I dare say you have felt it in your own Christian homes—that if you would teach children properly you must carry them, as it were, with you in your prayers before the throne of grace. Thank God this Union has been instrumental in

pouring rays of light into many a dark and dreary home. Thank God many Ragged School children have been a blessing to parents, who but for them might never have known that there is a God, that there is a Bible, that there is such a thing as prayer, that there is another world besides this one. Although parents generally may not all at once, take in things of this kind from the lips of their children, yet I feel certain that if we persevere in our work one result will be that we shall be the means of introducing what an eminent modern author has called "sweetness and light" into many a corrupt and dreary home. I speak, my friends, as one who knows something about the moral and spiritual condition of London. I have lived and worked in London for seven-and-twenty years; I know that there is a great deal of work to be done there, and that the best way of doing it is not to wait until we have found what may appear to be an absolutely perfect system, but to do what comes first to our hands. If we cannot get what is necessary done in our own way, let us help men who are trying to do it in theirs; only let the work be done. I am glad to find that you are doing something for the promotion of temperance. The other day, at the annual meeting of the Church of England Temperance Society, I heard a speech full of culture and interest from a man whose mind has been scientifically trained, and who, though he could not go quite as far as some of us do in reference to the use of alcohol, said there was one thing in which all must agree, namely, that the young do not want it. Let us begin with the young, and then we may expect to make satisfactory progress. My lord, I have been to-day to a place of a very sad character, where I had to perform one of the most blessed functions of my high office; I mean "The Home for Female Inebriates," situated at Kennington Park. I held there a confirmation. I must say it was one of the saddest things I ever beheld in my life, to see about ninety females, almost all very young, one of them being only fourteen years of age, in such a place as that. There they were being taught, under good discipline, how to get rid of the debasing habit of drinking; there, too, they had been brought under the influence of the preaching of the blessed Gospel. I had the happiness of confirming twenty-three of them, and I trust that, under the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, those young women will permanently enjoy that liberty wherewith Christ maketh His people free. Surely, however, prevention is, in this case as in others, better than cure. I would not, indeed, have temperance put in the place of the Gospel, but I believe that temperance may be made a handmaid to the Gospel, and I would urge you all to do all you can to save the young, at all events, from the tyranny of this sin. Now, I thank God that I see before me this evening an army of Christian workers. I would ask you, my friends, to try to learn more and more of the power of love. You will not persevere in your work unless you get a great deal of love in your hearts, as, I believe, you would never have begun it but for the power of love. Let me here ask you to take away with you a thought

which I have sometimes found comforting to my own mind, and which may also be comforting to yours. Have you not cause to thank God for the will to use opportunities for Him, and for giving you opportunities? When you are trying to do good, think not merely of the work which you are doing, but also how the Lord Jesus Christ loves you, and has shown His love by permitting you to do something for His dear name's sake. This feeling will help you to love the children who are placed under your care; it will help you to train them for Christ; and it will justify your work. Depend upon it, love is a very great force in this world. Some of these children never knew what kindness was until they came to a Ragged School. Try, by the grace of God, to win them for Him. Further, I would ask you to recollect the necessity of diligence. There is no time to be lost. Let me tell you a story, it is a sort of parable, but I believe it is a true story. One Sunday evening a minister of the Gospel came back to his study after the services of the day, weary and sorrowful at heart, feeling that he had not done any good that day. He had been preaching the Gospel, but he thought the people did not attend to what he said, and he was tempted to give up his work as a failure. In this mood he slept, and "dreamed a dream." He dreamed that he was in hell, and that he was present at a council of fallen spirits, who were considering how they might best tempt men in this world to the ruin of their souls. One evil spirit after another came forward and gave his advice in the matter before the assembly. One spirit said, "Go and tell men that there is no God;" but another replied, "That won't do; all men know that there is a God, and it is useless to tell them there is not." Another said, "Tell them there is no Bible;" but another answered, "That won't do; they know there is a Bible, for they read it." Another said, "Tell them there is no heaven and no hell;" but another objected that that would not do. At last there came forward a spirit far craftier and subtler than the preceding ones, and he said, "I'll tell you what to do; tell them that there is a God; tell them that there is a Bible, and it is true; tell them that there is a heaven and there is a hell, but also tell them that there is no hurry." Go home, my friends, with that thought in your minds, and remember it in the midst of your work. The last thing I have to say is this: get faith into your hearts, believe that God is with you, that this task is His task, and He means to persevere, and that He loves these children—loves them with an unspeakable, indescribable love, and that it is because He loves them that He has placed them under your care.

The Rev. Dr. MANNING, in seconding the resolution, said:—Though I may not be able to say, in the words of "Goldsmith's Traveller," that I have "surveyed mankind from China to Peru," yet I may say that between Damascus in the east, and San Francisco in the west, there are few great capitals or populous cities which I have not visited, and I must confess that nowhere have I seen anything so repulsive and horrible as was the condition of the lowest stratum of English society in London

a few years ago. In my wanderings about this metropolis it has seemed to me that in our blind alleys and back slums we have even still a condition of things which is a scandal and disgrace to our Christianity and our civilisation. Nowhere will you find hoary heads more dishonoured and disgraced; nowhere will you find manhood or womanhood with fewer traces of virtue or modesty, or children in whom seem more completely lost all the brightness and beauty and bloom of childhood. In many of these little children, with their hungry looks and wolfish eyes, you may see the stamp of vice and crime plainly branded. Their forms are so stunted, their features so disfigured, that it would almost seem as if in them the very lineaments of humanity were lost, and they were doomed to a life of vice and suffering. But what appears their doom is owing to the selfishness and wickedness of their parents, and alas! to the neglect of the Christian Churches of this land. That is the kind of spectacle which has met my gaze when, after travelling in other lands, I have come back to my own, and have gone into some of the back slums and blind alleys of London. In witnessing it I have felt that I must bow my head with shame. It has often seemed to me as if the cry were coming forth from the silence of heaven with regard to these ruined and fallen ones.—"Where is thy brother Abel?" Our answer has too often appeared to be, "Am I my brother's keeper?" But the reply from heaven has been, "Yes, and the blood of Abel thy brother crieth from the ground against thee." In comparing the condition of the lowest stratum of English society with what is found elsewhere throughout Christendom, I feel, first of all, that here we have a distinct reason for national humiliation. Coleridge used to say that every Englishman, as he stood before the glass shaving himself in the morning, always thanked God that he was born an Englishman. For my part, I don't perform upon myself with a razor, but nevertheless I confess that I can appreciate the simple lines—

"I thank the goodness and the grace
That on my birth has smiled,
And made me in these Christian days
A happy English child."

I believe that England may justly be called the metropolis of Christianity and of civilisation, and that no nation has such noble minds as our own. Especially do I believe in the nobleness of our philanthropic efforts, and this is particularly impressed upon me in the presence of Lord Shaftesbury, of whom I may say that, notwithstanding the burden of fourscore years, "his eye is not dimmed, nor his natural force abated," and who during nearly the whole of his long life has been a leader, pioneer, and exemplar in all great works of Christian philanthropy. But, in the midst of so much that is encouraging and hopeful, we must recollect that there is also much that is horrible and degrading. We must not be boastful or arrogant while there is so much evil to be redressed; on the contrary, we must bow our heads with shame on account of what I have depicted. Happily, something has been done towards redressing this terrible evil. Al-

though I have not lived fourscore years, I can go back in thought nearly threescore years, and my memory enables me to compare the past with the present, and to recall the early efforts of Ragged School teachers. What do I see this evening? I see here some of the fruits of the struggle to arrest this fearful evil. I see here signs of some rays of light which have shot down into the darkness, some results of healing and remedial measures which have been brought to bear upon the foul disease of our fallen humanity. And to whom, I would ask, are these results due, except to such agencies as those among which the Ragged School Union has taken a leading part? Last year we celebrated the centenary of Sunday Schools, and well did they deserve that celebration; but let us not forget that the Sunday School established by Robert Raikes at Gloucester 100 years ago was a Ragged School—a school in which children of the same class as those with whom the Union deals were collected and taught, so that Ragged Schools are, in fact, a revival of a work which was commenced a century back. In looking over the Report I was struck with the extraordinary activity and cleverness of the managers and teachers connected with the Union in drawing children into the schools. Just think for a moment of what is included in there being 34,000 children in the Sunday Schools, 5,000 children in the Day Schools, and 3,016 voluntary teachers! I believe that a teacher in this great work gets quite as much as he gives, or rather more. He derives benefit himself from having to teach children. When Dr. Whewell was once asked by some one to recommend him a tutor, "Tutor!" he replied, "nonsense, get a pupil!" Depend upon it, my friends, that you are most likely to find out the weak points and dark spots in your experience when you are using it in efforts to teach children. Let me conclude by relating an old legend of the Church in mediæval times. With all my detestation and horror of the corruptions and superstitions of Popery, I must say that I am not insensible to the beauty of some of the old mediæval legends, and the one which I now have in my mind appears to me very interesting and instructive. A saintly and gallant knight of noble birth and heroic spirit, wishing to achieve some great deed for Christ, left his home in search of adventures. As he passed out of his castle gate he saw, sitting by the wayside, an old beggar, foul with leprosy, asking alms, and as he passed by he threw him a gold coin. The coin was left untouched, because it had been given with pride and scorn. The knight went on his way. Day after day, month after month, year after year, he traversed sea and land in search of an opportunity of performing some high and noble deed for his heavenly Master, but all in vain. At last, with his back bent by years, his once luxuriant locks thin and grey, and his mind in a most depressed and desponding state, he returned to his castle, feeling that he would now be a stranger in his own home. As he approached the castle gate, there he saw the old beggar, squalid with rags, and foul with leprosy. Softened by what he had gone through, he descended from his horse, took up the poor

leper in his arms, and pressed him tenderly to his breast. As he was bearing him to a place of shelter the leper was suddenly transfigured in his arms; the foul scurf fell off, and he who had rejected the coin flung to him in scorn now appeared to the astonished knight in the beautiful form of the Master Himself. Ragged School teachers, fellow-labourers in the cause of Christ, let me apply this legend to yourselves. Let not the degradation or repulsiveness of those who may come within the reach of your influence repel you; but when you see what looks foul and repulsive, remember that Christ may in the end reveal Himself to you in the midst of your work, and that soon you may hear from Him the words, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these ye have done it unto Me."

The resolution was then put and carried.

W. HAIG MILLER, Esq., author of "Mirage of Life," then delivered the substance of the following address to the old scholars:—I remember, some fifty years ago, when I came a young man to London to push my fortunes, being taken to the Royal Exchange, and having pointed out to me Mr. Rothschild, the wealthiest man in London, or the "great capitalist," as he was called, as he leaned against his pillar, and there made bargains which swayed the money market in Europe. How eagerly my eye looked upon him, he so rich and I so poor! Now I am reminded of that scene to-night, for I, a man advanced in years, am looking at hundreds of young capitalists seated before me, who are rich, if not in money, in what is better than money—in that which all the gold of the Bank of England cannot buy—in youth, and in all the capabilities of happiness and usefulness which are included in that word.

As I look upon you, therefore, with the immense treasure of youth in your possession, my first question is, What are you going to do with it? The ancients had a story that Hercules, one of their great men, when he was young, was met one day by two figures. One looked very smiling, but when you looked more closely had a disagreeable expression of countenance; the other had a severe sort of look, but when you noticed her also more narrowly, had a singularly sweet smile passing across her face. The one was False Pleasure, the other Virtue. "Follow me," said the first, "and you will have no trouble, no labour, only amusement. You shall have your own way, and a merry time. "Follow me, Hercules," said Virtue; "you will have labour and effort and difficulty, but you will have satisfaction, and respect, and honour, and pleasure in looking back upon life." Hercules took Virtue's advice. So, at your time of life, two characters are sure to meet you and offer you their hand to conduct you. The one is Folly, and the other is Wisdom. Which are you going to take? You cannot have both. You now stand on what is like a mountain that Miss Bird saw in her travels. It was called the "Great Divide." It decided in what direction a great river was to flow. So it is with you now. How is your life to flow? To honour, glory, and immortality, or to shame and dishonour? The answer to the question is very much in your own

hands. It will depend largely upon how you decide to spend your youth, whether your life is to end as honourably as that of our Chairman is doing, or as ignominiously as that of some of the youths whom the police van has taken to prison this morning.

So, then, the journey of life is before you. Let me recommend you a companion on the road; his name is Good Conscience. He knows the road of life well, every turn of it, and if you treat him well he will be excellent company for you. He will, even when the weather is black and stormy, bring out music and cheer you. Yes, my dear young friends, Good Conscience will play sweeter harmony in your ears than the sweetest vocalist at a music hall or theatre ever could; but beware of offending him. He will then scourge you, and make your life miserable. I was struck in reading the life of the great Dr. Johnson with the incident which they have engraved upon his monument at Lichfield—that one day, when he had become a great man, he was missed from a house at which he had been staying, and was found to have gone to Uttoxeter Market Place, where, fifty years before, he had disobeyed his father, and that there he stood for an hour with his hat in his hand before many spectators. His conscience, after that long lapse of time, still troubled him, and he took that eccentric mode of expressing his regret. Reverence, then, conscience. Do nothing to offend it, and you will escape its strokes, which are more terrible than the whip with which the law flogs garotters. Oh, it is a great thing to have such a principle of right; that if this hall were filled with uncounted gold—not your own—it could be said of you, "It is all safe in his hands!" Frederick the Great left the key that locked up all the doors of his treasure vaults, not in the hands of a nobleman, but of an old soldier, because he knew he was incorruptible.

I have called you young capitalists. Take care, my young friends, of one part of your capital. I mean health. Don't throw it away by carelessness. You will never know what a jewel it is till you have parted with it. I know the name of a millionaire, now dead, who said, "I would give £100,000 for restoration to health;" but he could not purchase it back. Use, then, your teeth for a right purpose, to chew your food with, not, as the proverb says, "to dig your grave with," by eating to excess. Then be sure and take Nature's great sauce to your food; you will find it give such a flavour to it. I do not mean any of those sauces which are sold in pickle shops, but temperance in eating and drinking. Use this, and instead of dying prematurely, you may have a beautiful old age like our Chairman. Act on the advice of the old Spaniard who lived till he was 110, and who said that, although old, he could live as if he were young, because when young he lived as if he were old.

The great Emperor Napoleon I., when, at St. Helena, he saw a person bearing a burden, saluted it by an act of courtesy, because he respected the person who was thus engaged in an act of honest labour. And as I look on either side of me, I see not only young persons, but, I believe, persons who have been at work. I look

upon you, therefore, with great and real respect. You belong to what the biographer of George Stephenson, the railway engineer, said that great man did—to the noble family of workers. To work well! Oh, what a happiness that is! Therefore my next counsel to you is, love your work; give your whole mind to it, and determine to excel in it. If I were to take you to the homes of some of those artists whose beautiful pictures or works are now being exhibited, you would find that they had an enthusiasm for their work; they preferred it even to sleep or food. Now, there is no reason why you should not have the same pleasure in doing your work as they have in doing their pictures or statues, or in making a coat, or a pair of shoes, in sewing an apron, or in sweeping a room, as they have in carving a statue. Try to do your work well and thoroughly, so that it shall be a credit to you when you meet it again. The great Mr. Carlyle has described what pleasure his father had in seeing a bridge which he had helped, as a boy, to build still standing, and of use in the world fifty years afterwards; and you may have the same pleasure in making good work instead of doing it so badly that it will leave nothing but grumbling and dissatisfaction behind it. I always admire the anecdote of the gentleman who did everything so well that he rose, by God's blessing, to be a member of Parliament from a very humble rank in life; and when a gentleman, whose father's servant he had once been, so far forgot himself as to try to insult him by saying, "Why, you once blacked my father's boots," nobly replied, "Yes, and did not I black them well?"

Good work brings after it money. Oh, what a beautiful thing is the money which a young person gets for his work—clear, pure money; honestly earned. How pleasant to look at it, and feel, "This is my own, and what I have wrought for!" There is a place I want you to visit. I will tell you what it is by telling you a little story. A Dutch gentleman, a very good man, came to England. He now speaks and writes the English language beautifully, but then he understood it very imperfectly. Well, on coming out of the steamer, he felt that his beard was very rough, and, being fond of a neat and tidy appearance, which is such a very desirable thing in young people, he thought that he would go to a barber's shop, and get himself shaved. I told you that his knowledge of the English language was not very good. Well, he kept looking about, till all at once he came to a large house, which seemed the very thing he wanted; for over it he read the words "Savings Bank," which he thought must mean a place for shaving. You may imagine the surprise of the manager and the clerk of the savings bank when he took off his neckcloth, and in his broken English said he came to be shaved, and the roar of laughter which followed on both sides when the mistake that he had made was discovered. Now, though the Dutch gentleman made a mistake in going to the savings bank, it is the very place I want you to go to with a part of the money you get for your wages. When the governor of one of our Australian colonies asked the natives to whom he had given some

seeds, fish-hooks, and other things, what they had done with them, they said that they were all doing very well, except the fish-hooks, and they had not grown at all. But if you put a part of your money in the savings bank (I say a part, for I hope that you will be able to give a little for God's cause), you will find it fish-hooks that will grow, and will enable you, with God's blessing, to have the glorious privilege of living out of debt, and to catch many of the nice things in life which they get who make a thrifty use of their money.

Another thing which I would recommend to you, as what has been a source of great pleasure to me in life, is the love of reading. Books have been such friends to me! A good book is a companion for all weathers. It is never out of temper; it will cheer you when your are dull; and you may converse with it for a long or a short time, and it will never complain when you lay it down. Then what enjoyment you may have out of it! You may travel all along Africa with Dr. Livingstone without being fatigued. If you take up a volume of history you may learn all about what was being done in England by your forefathers, who made, by their exertions, our country so great, and so free as it is now. In Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," you will be able to travel with Christian from the City of Destruction up to the gates of the Celestial City. There is no end to the pleasure of a good book; and, then, you can get it so easily. A rich Roman at a time when the Romans kept slaves, and had not the art of printing, used to keep some slaves with good memories, who learned particular books off by heart, and when he wanted to be entertained by an author, he would send for a particular slave, who would come and recite the book to him. But, without all this trouble, you may, for a very few shillings, lay the foundation for a small and good library, which, if studied carefully, will strengthen your mind, and make you quite independent of foolish amusements. If a deadly serpent were to appear on this platform, how anxious we should be to keep out of its way! And so with wicked books; shun and abhor them. We should be able to ask God's blessing on the books we read, as much as on our food, and I hope with all your reading you will not forget to read your Bible. A native came to Dr. Moffat and said that he feared his dog would be no good for fighting, because it had eaten a leaf of the Bible, for he had observed that whoever had much to do with that book ceased to be passionate or have any evil temper. May the reading of the Bible have this blessed effect on you, my young friends.

Do take care what friends you form. A person is known by the acquaintance he keeps. A young dog, so runs the fable, that had not much knowlege of the world, fell in with an older dog of very engaging manners; but as they trotted through a country village, a farmer recognised the old dog as one that had worried his sheep, and it was hanged. Then the poor young dog was hanged too, for although no one knew anything against it, yet they said it could not be good for much, considering the company it had been found in. So it is nowadays. Take care of the company

you keep. You cannot touch tar without being defiled.

Now, my dear young friends, romantic as it may sound, there is for you, entering into life, such a friend to be found—Jesus Christ, the Lord of heaven and earth, solicits your friendship. It sounds romantic to mention such a thing, but it is quite true. He wants, if you will let Him, to come into your hearts, and take possession of them, and guide you sweetly to heaven. See how He was with Joseph in the pit, Joseph in the slave-market, Joseph when in Potiphar's house, Joseph in the hour of temptation, Joseph in prison, Joseph in Pharaoh's chariot, Joseph in his peaceful home, Joseph in his dying hour, and I advise you to take this Friend at once—there is no time like the present—if you have not done it already. Everything about life is so uncertain. I have spoken to you as having the capital of health and life. I once heard Mr. Spurgeon give his interesting lecture on candles. There was life at seventy represented by a candle nearly burned out; there was life at ten and twenty represented by other candles, tall and solemn. "But let no man presume," said Mr. Spurgeon, "for the youngest candle may be blown out."

Then, my dear young friends, it is very common when addressing young people to tell them to aspire, to aim high, and to improve their condition in life. It is not always the highest place that is the happiest, as was seen in the case of the poor Emperor of Russia, who was killed the other day; but I hope you will aspire to become the very best thing that you are capable of: if you are to be a servant, that you will aspire to be the best servant; if you are to be a tailor, that you will aspire to be the very best tailor. And if God, as He very often does, has given to you talents to shine in a higher sphere, that you will gain success by doing your present duty well. I confess I wish you to find life, as I have done since I knew my Saviour—a joyful, happy, and successful thing; that you may know as I do in my old age, what a pleasant thing it is to waken in the morning and feel, "Here is another day in which I may love and serve God." You may have seen the crown in the Tower which the Queen wears on her coronation day: I wish, strange as it may sound to you, to feel that your hats and bonnets are changed into crowns, and that as you put them on your heads you may feel that they cover a kingdom. For so it is; our souls are kingdoms, with tempers to govern, with bad things to restrain, and good things to pursue; and the boy or girl who, by the help of the Holy Spirit, governs Himself as Jesus Christ did in His youth, is a real, royal king or queen. I want you, as the late Spencer Thornton was at Rugby School, to be such a bright example of goodness in your youth that it might be said of you by your employers, as was said of him by his master, the great Dr. Arnold, of Rugby School, "I could stand with my hat in my hand to that boy." Remember you have all of you an influence for good or evil, and pray to God that that influence may be good; for, like the ray of light from a lighthouse, you can never tell how far it may reach, so great is the power of a good example.

Was not that an amusing, but at the same time most instructive illustration of influence, in the case of a little boy? He went to school, and they washed his face. His mother, when she came home, noticing the improvement, washed hers. The father did the same; then the neighbours washed theirs, and then the next neighbour to them, till the washing went down the whole street, and ended in their going to the Mission Hall, where they learned a better washing still, a washing from guilt and sin.

Then I wish you all, my dear young friends, and girls, to have a life that will in some measure bear looking back again. Sometimes on a road we come to a high hill, where we can see all the way we have travelled, and I wish you, if you are spared, so to manage life that you may have satisfaction in the retrospect; and so, if you take Christ for your friend, you will in some measure find it. Instead of crying out with Solomon or Lord Chesterfield, "I have found it all vanity and vexation of spirit," you will be able, with good Dr. Doddridge, to say, "My days begin and end in pleasure, and seem short because they are so delightful." Then I wish you all, not only to have a pleasant retrospect of life, but to have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of heaven. How splendid it is to see a naturally timid young lady like Miss Havergal saying, when the doctor told her that she would die that day, that the news was glorious, and almost too good to be true, so much did she rejoice to meet her Saviour. And remember that there is an abundant entrance into the kingdom of evil as well as into the kingdom of glory. I heard of a sad case of this kind. A burglar well known to the police was difficult to catch. At last, one day he entered a house to commit a robbery. He had just managed with his housebreaking tools to force open some cabinet and take a watch and chain from it when, having a diseased heart, he fell down dead. When the people entered the room, there was the robber dead, the watch in one hand and the housebreaking tool in the other. Was not this a sad illustration of a man getting an abundant entrance into the kingdom of evil? In conclusion, let me say that earthly things are often but the shadow of heavenly ones. Prizes have this night been given to you before a large assemblage, presided over by an honourable nobleman. May it remind you of a still greater assembly, at which we shall be present in company with all the family of Adam. Then Jesus Christ shall Himself distribute to those who love Him the rewards of glory—honour and eternal life. Oh! what a thing to be crowned by His hands, while it is proclaimed before an assembled universe, "Thus let it be done to the man whom the King delighteth to honour." In the quickening sense of such a prospect, may you now so return to your duties as to "adorn the doctrines of your Saviour" by the excellent manner in which you shall perform them.

The juvenile choir then sang the beautiful, plaintive song of "The Two Flowers."

The Rev. H. PRICE HUGHES, M.A.,

then moved the following resolution:—

"That this meeting, thankfully recognising the value of the many agencies affiliated with the Ragged School Union, desires again to record its gratitude to Almighty God for past successes, and pledges itself to assist the Committee in sustaining and extending these beneficent efforts for the moral and spiritual welfare of the destitute poor."

The reverend gentleman said: Her Majesty's Ministers in both Houses of Parliament have moved, or are at this very time proposing, that a monument shall be erected in Westminster Abbey as a memorial of the gifted and remarkable man whose death has been so widely mourned. That is, no doubt, a great honour, but I confess, my lord, it seems to me to have been an even greater honour that a monument of love should have been presented to yourself on your eightieth birthday by such a vast number of the boys and girls of London. In the address presented to you on that occasion at the Guildhall there occurred this remarkable sentence: "In London alone, at least 300,000 of the youth of both sexes have been rescued from the ranks of the criminal and dangerous classes, and made good and useful citizens, and loyal and faithful subjects of Her Majesty." Why, my lord, we need no other evidence than that simple fact of the importance of the Ragged School Union and of the necessity Ragged School organisation. I cannot help expressing my strong conviction of the importance of the work in a political and national, as well as in a moral and religious aspect. The resolution passed at the Guildhall meeting speaks of Ragged Schools as having made the children taught useful citizens and loyal subjects of the Queen. The work was a great work in relation to the children, and was well worth doing for their sake, rescuing those who, as has been truly said, were ignorant in the midst of knowledge, savages in the midst of civilisation, and heathens in the midst of Christianity. But it was also a great work for the nation, and must be attended with great national results. The great mass of the people have, whether for weal or for woe, been entrusted with the Parliamentary franchise; and it was well said by Lord Sherbrooke, in a celebrated speech on that subject, we must "educate our masters." Education, to be at all satisfactory, must be moral and religious as well as secular. The education given in the Board Schools is almost entirely secular. (No, no.) I do not complain of that—it is inevitable. But for that very reason we must look for religious education to such voluntary efforts as are now represented in this hall.

Alderman Sir ROBERT CARDEN then moved the following:—

"That the hearty thanks of this meeting be given to the noble chairman, the Earl of Shaftesbury, for his kindness in presiding on this the thirty-seventh occasion (as well as over many hundreds of local meetings of Ragged Schools), and for his unwearied exertions in the cause of the Society."

Sir Robert, in proposing this resolution, created some amusement by remarking that Lord Shaftesbury had not yet had his dinner, and that he himself was in a similar position.

The Rev. B. CASSIN, in seconding

the resolution, applied to Lord Shaftesbury the words on the monument to Sir Christopher Wren, and said that if his lordship wanted a monument he had only to look around him (alluding to the old scholars on the platform), adding, in allusion to the fact mentioned at the Guildhall celebration, that his lordship had been instrumental in the rescuing of 300,000 children from degradation.

The motion having been put and carried with great cordiality, the children all holding up both hands,

The EARL OF SHAFTESBURY said: Let me express in one or two words the deep gratitude I feel for what was done to my honour a week or two ago. My friend the Rev. Burman Cassin has alluded to the language of one of the songs sung this evening:

> "Don't forget the old folks,
> But love them more and more."

That was an appeal made for me. (Laughter.) Sir Robert Carden, my friends, appealed to your tender feelings on his own and on my behalf on the ground that I had not had my dinner. That may be a very serious matter in my case, but it cannot be so in the case of such a youngster as he is. (Laughter.) When he can go down to the country and win a contested election he must have strength enough to bear very well the delay of his dinner. (Laughter.) Now, my young friends (addressing the old scholars), I am placed in a very remarkable position. I have, as the chairman, given you prizes for having kept your places for a twelvemonth, and I have also given you a certificate of good character; while those who received me at the Guildhall the other day presented me with your certificate of good character, and gave me also a prize for having held my situation more than a twelvemonth to the satisfaction of my employers. (Laughter.) I was, I can assure you, greatly delighted with what was presented to me at the Guildhall as the result of the efforts of the Ragged School Union. I was touched by hearing the subscriptions had ranged from one farthing to a guinea. The address given to me appears to me one of the most gratifying records to be found in the history of any public life. I shall not detain the meeting with any arguments with reference to the present state of things, but I must just allude to the awful fact mentioned in the Report of the revival of what I had thought was quite extinct—I mean the penny gaff. (Hear, hear.) It was the penny gaff that led to most of the forms of mischief with which we formerly had to deal. I well remember that in the early history of Ragged Schools we found that in nine cases out of ten the first act of dishonesty which a child committed was the stealing of a penny to go to a penny gaff, and I hope that that kind of evil is not going to be renewed. Again, I see it is stated in the Report that ladies have very great influence and power when they go among the roughs. That is perfectly true. I will undertake to say that if a few of the ladies in this assembly could be dropped down in some of the lowest parts of London, and be engaged there for a week in full activity, that district would afterwards be found to have made a wonderful advance in

civilisation. Only one word more, and the last, as to the principle on which the Union was founded, and the principle on which it is now conducted. There were at one time many differences between ourselves and the School Board, but that controversy has now ceased. There was hostility between us at first because neither understood the work of the other; but, as I pointed out at the Guildhall, while we could not ascend to their heights, they could not descend to our depths. We have a definite object in view—to advance the kingdom of Christ. That is our special aim, and if we persevere shall we not achieve still greater triumphs than those which we have obtained hitherto, and may we not have the blessing to rejoice over 300,000 more children rescued from a life of sin and misery and trained in the nurture of the Lord? I implore that God will shed the light of His countenance on all the children and all the teachers now assembled. As to the teachers, I would say to them, show the same singleness of heart, the same unselfishness, the same pureness of mind, and the same zeal for the welfare of children as you have hitherto done, and may God bless you both individually and collectively!

The children afterwards sang another hymn and "God save the Queen," and the Rev. Burman Cassin closed the proceedings with the Benediction.

GOLDEN LANE AND HOXTON COSTERMONGERS' CHRISTIAN MISSION.

President: The Right Hon. the EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, K.G.

MR. ORSMAN'S MISSION TO COSTERMONGERS.

OUR friend Mr. G. Holden Pike says that, "Before it was touched by the hands of innovating improvers, Golden Lane was one of those districts which attract the social explorer in London by their sheer squalid picturesqueness. It is just such a place as Charles Dickens would have loved to visit; and in its dusky main street, as well as in its honeycomb of courts and alleys, he would have stored his mind with many a vivid picture of real life, to reproduce his impressions with the originality of genius in the pages of fiction. The population is a motley throng, and at the best can only be roughly classified. Within the narrow area of a furlong radius from Mr. Orsman's mission station, a crowd of 15,000 persons find a home, and these are thus divided by the volunteer evangelist: Thirty per cent. are costermongers and itinerant street traders; 20 per cent. are labourers and poor women, who live by washing, charing, and needlework; 30 per cent. are either paupers or persons of doubtful occupation; and the remaining 20 per cent. are industriously wearing out their lives in the attempt

GOLDEN LANE & HOXTON COSTERMONGERS' MISSION. [See page 100.

to earn a livelihood at the following occupations: artificial flower makers, brace-sewing at twopence per dozen pairs, toy-makers, wood-choppers, and crossing-sweepers, gutter-searchers for cigar ends, bone-pickers, and dust-bin searchers for doctors' bottles, which, when washed, are sold to chemists at one shilling and ninepence per gross; also fuzee, sweetstuff, and herb sellers, dealers in old clothes, and sorters of the clearings of warehouses," &c.

In a letter to Lord Russell, in 1856, the Rev. William Rogers, now the esteemed Rector of Bishopsgate, thus describes Golden Lane:—

"The inhabitants of this district are peculiar. We are peculiar, not only as numbering in our ranks a very much larger per-centage of bad and profligate people than is to be found in other districts; the very nature of the courts and houses breeds this kind of gentry, rendering this locale a complete refuge for the dissolute; so that whenever a gang of thieves, fortune-tellers, or others of this class are routed out from one neighbourhood, they are sure to resort hither, as well knowing that if the police, stirred up by the inhabitants, will not suffer them to remain in other places, here, at all events, they will be undisturbed, and may carry on their nefarious practices in peace.

"But we are peculiar in another way: we are not, like the inhabitants of Bethnal Green or St. George's-in-the-East, who are employed in some particular business, either silk weaving or working in the docks, and who, though very poor, are at the same time industrious, but we are all ragamuffins. This is our peculiarity; *we are a district of ragamuffins.*"

Mr. Orsman was one of the early fruits of Mr. Spurgeon's ministry. Having experienced the power of Divine grace in his own soul, he at once became desirous of communicating the blessing to others, and for a time he engaged in Christian work about the south of London. In the spring of 1861 he set up his Gospel standard in Golden Lane. "In my first visits to these people," he once wrote, "I was compelled to witness the grossest immoralities, and to hear the foulest language from the lips of young and old. There were 'twopenny hopping-cribs,' in which, stimulated by drink, the young of both sexes joined; drunken fights and robberies with violence were of daily occurrence. The sanitary condition of the district was equally bad."

Mr. G. Holden Pike proceeds:—"Had we asked 'rare Ben Jonson' what he meant by a *costard-monger*, he might perhaps have replied that a costard-monger was a man who preferred the locality of Golden Lane to any other part of London; and that he retailed fruits and vegetables in the streets of the City after growing them in his own patch of garden ground, or after making his purchases of the farmers of

St. Luke's and Shoreditch. One hundred and fifty years later Dr. Johnson too narrowly defined *costermonger* as a seller of apples; but forcibly true and even quaint is the definition which one of these men recently gave of himself—"A cove wot works werry 'ard for a werry poor livin'.' His calling is both arduous and precarious, and if in a prosperous season his earnings amount to a pound a week, his privations in what are called hard times are exceedingly severe. The coster styles himself 'a general dealer,' the *general* being equivalent to that popular term, Jack-of-all-trades. When the coster rises of a morning he may not only not know whence the means may come wherewith he shall purchase his evening meal; when, with his empty barrow he goes forth on his day's adventures, he does not know in what kind of merchandise his scanty capital will be embarked. In any case he will rise with the lark or long before, and the condition of the markets will determine whether he 'load up' with fish or vegetables. The day's duties may commence with a flying visit to Billingsgate, where a three-halfpenny breakfast from the street coffee-stall is found to be even more exhilarating than the keen air of early morning. If fish be abundant and cheap—cheapness with the coster being a *sine quâ non*—he may speculate in herrings or mackerel and have 'a good day;' but not seldom he has to beat a retreat from the river side to find openings for his capital in the vegetable market, though in times of extreme scarcity he is repelled at all points, and may half despairingly have to wend his way homeward late in the morning with a still unladen barrow."

For some time the work has been held in divers places. When it had one settled home, the operations were most multifarious, comprising Sabbath Services, Sunday Schools, Children's Services; and during the week, Prayer Meetings, Bible Readings, Free Day School, Evening School, Benefit Clubs, Savings Bank, Loan Society (founded in memory of Emily, Countess of Shaftesbury), British Workman Dinners weekly to 200 poor children, Coal distribution at half prime cost to aged, sick, and really destitute; and two Bible Women.

But what are the fruits of this volunteer mission? In regard to Mr. Orsman's work we can unhesitatingly affirm that the entire moral tone of the district has been improved.

The donkeys of London generally have been large gainers by the Golden Lane Mission. No sooner does a coster become a changed character than his donkey benefits by the altered circumstances. More than this, however, Donkey Shows, at which the best animals take considerable prizes, have done a good work in awakening a spirit of wholesome emulation among the men, and this is equivalent to so much kind treatment of their donkeys.

Numbers who once rioted in profligacy now profess the name of Christ, and are regular communicants. Not a few have established themselves as thriving Christian householders in our English colonies. Some of the rescued now serve their country in the Civil Service; others labour in the Sabbath School; and some have even gone forth to preach the Gospel.

Mr. Orsman, in referring to his present and future work, says that "the Golden Lane of 1860, so grapically described, belongs to history, it has virtually no existence. The St. Luke's Improvement Committee took possession of our premises—124, Golden Lane—in September, 1879, and as they had given a verbal promise that we should have shortly a plot of ground on easy terms for our new building, we obtained temporary accommodation for our numerous meetings at the following places:—Chequer Alley; 199, Whitecross Street, Clerkenwell Road, and the Foresters' Hall.

"As the courts and alleys were cleared away, we pressed the parish authorities to redeem their promises. Partly on account of the displacement of some of our old friends on the Board, and partly because they had largely exceeded their calculations and borrowing powers, we were told that we could only become the possessor of a site by purchasing the ground on the same terms as the public, viz., at a price varying from £2 to £4 per superficial foot. As this course would have absorbed the whole of our building fund in ground only, we let the matter rest for a time.

"At last, in June, 1880, the lease of a large house and shop, 81, Old Street, and facing Golden Lane, was in the market, and after some consideration the lease was purchased for a hundred guineas. It was speedily fitted up and adapted for the meetings held in the places named, with the exception of the Foresters' Hall, where our Sunday Special Services have been held since 1875.

"When we were despairing of having a suitable building on the spot where we had laboured for the Lord twenty years, our attention was drawn to the spiritual needs of the *adjoining district of Hoxton Old Town*, in the parish of St. Leonard's, Shoreditch. Careful inquiry and personal visitation of the neighbourhood soon convinced us that a large field of labour was open to us; and when a corner plot of ground in the main thoroughfare—that had been cleared for Model Dwellings—was offered to us at a reasonable price, we laid the matter before the Lord and sought the advice of His people. Our Trustees and Committee said, "Go to Hoxton!" The Workers in the District said, "Come! There is plenty of room for your special work;" and when our own people of Golden Lane—many of whom had already moved to Hoxton—joined in the chorus, we felt that our future path was made clear.

"The distance is one mile from Golden Lane, and a splendid site, 93 feet by 50 feet, has been secured for £100 rental in the main High Street, at the corner of Wilmer Gardens. Messrs. Williams and Son, builders, of Thornhill Square, Islington, have taken the contract and commenced operations. Soon after Midsummer we hope to enter into our enlarged field of labour.

"The ground floor, comprising a line of shops and a Coffee Palace, will produce an income of £250 per annum. The upper part of the premises will be devoted to the Hall, Class and Club-rooms, and School-room. This plan commends itself to business men, as there will not only be a saving of £200 a year now paid for temporary premises, but also a balance in favour of the Mission arising from the profits of the shop rentals.

"*Personally*, we feel that we have taken the right step for the following reasons:—1st. In a few years there will be very few poor people in the Golden Lane locality, as the cleared ground is to be let for warehouses and factories.

"2nd. Hoxton Old Town is crowded with such people: it is also a rare coster district, and its High Street is filled with costermongers' barrows, &c.

"3rd. Nearly all our voluntary workers live in and near Hoxton, and as some of them were originally scholars in our Ragged School, this is an important consideration.

"Most of our friends are aware that our connection with the Mission has always been of a voluntary character, and lest any misapprehension should exist among friends who do not personally know us, as to our physical ability to enter into a third decade after twenty years' work, we rejoice to state that, as we had just gained our majority when we began this Mission, we have good physical reasons for hoping that we may be able to labour many years longer in winning souls to Christ.

"Our principal operations will embrace—for Juveniles:—

"*Schools* on Sunday and Free Schools on Week Evenings for Secular Subjects.

"*Working Lads' Institute*—Rooms for Reading and Recreation, and Classes for Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Grammar, Swimming, &c.

"*Poor Children's Dinners* (90,000 given since 1868), Soup Kitchen, Maternity and Medical Aid to the Destitute, &c.

"*For Adults there will be* GOSPEL SERVICES in the Hall, in the Open Air, and in Cottages, and frequent Meetings for Prayer and Praise.

"*Bible Classes*—Reading for Adults.

"*Costermongers'* Sick and Burial Clubs, Donkey and Barrow and Loan Funds.

"*Temperance Work* in the Coffee Palace—Adult Meetings, Band of Hope and Mercy for Children.

"*Lectures* on Sanitary Science and other subjects.

"The large hall, accommodating 900 people, will be used for all purposes that tend to the spiritual and social good of the people. Clubs now holding their meetings in the public-house will be invited to the Mission Rooms.

"Although it is not expected that any increase of subscriptions will be necessary to carry on this enlarged work, *the sum of* £1,500 *is absolutely necessary* to complete the premises. For twenty years we have been free of debt, and the bare prospect of it in this case depresses us. Surely the Lord's stewards will not fail to help us now!

"One friend offers £50, hoping that nine others will do the same; another offers £25, hoping that thirty-nine others will give a like amount.

"Contributions of any amount will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the Bankers (Messrs. Barclay, Bevan, and Co., 54, Lombard Street, E.C.), and by

"Yours faithfully,

"W. J. ORSMAN, Hon. Superintendent.

"Milton House, Shacklewell Green, Hackney, E."

ABBREVIATED TESTIMONIES OF THE VALUE OF THIS MISSION.

Lord Shaftesbury says:—"Mr. Orsman is engaged in a grand work for the benefit of the poorest classes of the metropolis. I shall be happy to aid so far as I can such admirable efforts."

The *Times*:—"The Mission had to deal with a community in which ignorance, intoxication, and depravity of every description prevailed to a deplorable extent, and although it cannot boast that it has eradicated those evils, yet it can point to hundreds of instances in which men, women, and children have been led into a better way of life under its influence."

Daily News: — "These poor costermongers need reclaiming terribly, and men who, like Mr. Orsman and his friends, voluntarily devote themselves to the good work, deserve the warmest and most efficient support from the public."

Daily Telegraph:—"Not any man has courage and confidence and patience enough to take on himself, as Mr. Orsman does, without fee or reward, the tremendous task not only of amending the morals of this great horde steeped to their necks in vice and misery—but likewise of feeding masses of neglected and hungry little children, providing to the best of his means shoes for their naked feet and shirts for their naked backs, inculcating in them honest and cleanly habits. The man who will do all this, out of pure love for the work, is one hard

to find, but when he is found, regarding it merely as a matter of national economy, *the hand of encouragement should be freely extended to him.*"

Rev. C. H. Spurgeon:—"We know of no evangelistic work in London so wisely conducted, and permanently useful, as that which was inaugurated by Mr. Orsman, and has been carried on by him so many years. Our beloved friend has always rejoiced in being connected with the Tabernacle, though he has not been dependent in any degree upon us for funds. Our heart rejoices at every remembrance of him. He is one of that honourable body of men who are not chargeable unto the churches, but abide in their callings and preach the Gospel freely. Only by labourers of this class can our back slums be reached. Hard by the very centre of infidelity our brother exhibits a practical Christianity, and he ought to have the sympathy of all believers in so doing, a sympathy not of words only, but shown in pecuniary help towards the buildings he requires."

[Mr. Orsman's work well deserves the title 'Golden.' We have known the work intimately for twenty years, and it is a great pleasure to us to endorse the above statements.—Ed. Q. R.]

PRAYER IN RAGGED SCHOOLS.

"He prayeth best who loveth best," says the writer of "The Ancient Mariner." What a profound and true saying that is of the Apostle John, "He that loveth God loveth his brother also."

All Ragged Schools have Prayer Meetings, some weekly, some monthly, some for teachers and scholars separately, others for them unitedly. At a recent Prayer Meeting attended by the writer, 400 scholars were present, and some 30 teachers. The order was excellent, and the demeanour devout; the prayers were to the point, and sufficiently simple for the children to follow and unitedly offer.

In the last number of the *Quarterly Record* a form of prayer was given as used by one of our schools. The teachers being more or less widely separated, are, at a specified time, brought into nearness, or oneness, by a common act of intercession. Here then is an instance of the communion of saints. The teachers pray for their class, for each child of the class, for each other, for the superintendents and other officers of the institution, and, as may be expected, the fruit of their work may be said to abound. No one can enter this school on a Sunday night without feeling that each teacher is actuated by the motto, "My class for Jesus."

In prayer at times there is irresistible persuasion. For example, in the East of London, some years since, the superintendent determined to expel an incorrigible boy. Before doing so he took him

into a private room, and kneeling before him, prayed earnestly for his salvation. In a short time the boy was kneeling by the side of the superintendent, and with sobs and tears praying earnestly that God would pardon him. The lad dated his conversion from that day. He became a member of a Christian community, and subsequently the pastor of a Baptist church.

In the week preceding the Annual Meeting of the Ragged School Union, a circular is addressed to the schools asking them to set apart a portion of the school time either in the afternoon or evening of the following Sabbath for prayer, for the purpose of asking God's blessing on the work of the past and of the coming year. A circular with such a request meets with a ready acquiescence, and some of the schools tell by letter in a friendly way any matters of interest associated with the gathering.

Thus a lady, "N. R. B.," reports of a visit to a school on the evening in question:—

A Sunday Evening School.

Pleasant as the sunshine after gloom, cheering as the welcome home after turmoil, is it to step out of the dingy streets of Lower Westminster into the plain schoolroom at 17, Horseferry Road, on Sunday evenings. Friendly greetings, loving yet respectful recognitions between teachers and pupils; all are seated; fourteen classes of about ten in each class; boys and girls, besides a room full of about fifty tinies upstairs; the harmonium leads their voices in praise to God; then comes prayer by the superintendent for a blessing on the school that evening, that Christ may become more precious to them, that some may give their hearts to Him that night; and also for a blessing on the morrow's large meeting at Exeter Hall, that the workers may be encouraged, and that the words spoken to the young people may be the means of leading some to decision for Christ. Then each teacher—dear Christians, whose time is only their own on Sundays and perhaps part of week-day evenings—with Bible in hand sit in front or midst of each class; here a class of quiet young men, former scholars, now earning their own living; here another of youths too old for day school, but not in full work; here the elder boys of the day school with others of other day schools, but who love this Sunday School. Again, a class of young women in various small places of service; another of elder girls of day schools, others of sisters of day-school boys, or of girls who used to attend here when there was a girls' day school; all looking up to their beloved teachers with attentive and satisfied faces, evidently happy as children in a loving parents' home. Out of little and crowded rooms they come. Here is a girl of fifteen, her little sister of ten lying ill in a wretched room for a

month in severe rheumatic pains; mother out all day making shirts, the only bread-winner, as father is out of work. He minds the sick little Mary, besides nursing baby, a noisy child of a few months old, and another lively little girl of three years. No one but herself and God knows what she has suffered. "Oh, she does pray earnest to Jesus," says mother. Teacher came last Sunday and said they prayed for her *by name* at the Sunday School.

Ah, this dear schoolroom! prayers to God ascending for it from Canada, where former teachers are now settled, from former scholars now in India or other quarters of the world. Angels looking down upon it, and, better than all, His eye who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me." Truly the subscribers to such a good though lowly work need not despair, but if they could be transported thither would say, in the words of Watts,

> "I have been there, and still would go,
> 'Tis like a little heaven below."

Also Lansdowne Place, Kent Street, tells of the earnest prayer offered for the conversion of their scholars, especially for those in the senior classes, and for the Ragged School Union, that its work may be fruitful and abide, &c.

HENRY STREET RAGGED SCHOOL.

Mr. J. F. Taylor, of 53, William Street, Regent's Park, N.W., the hon. secretary, is very desirous of increasing the usefulness of this effort. To this end a Lending Library has been established, which has proved a success, so far as the children are concerned, the books being in constant demand. Mr. Taylor hopes that some friends who have a surplus of children's books on their shelves will contribute out of their abundance, and so help a most deserving cause.

THE CHILDREN'S DAY IN THE COUNTRY.

We beg to call the attention of our friends to Lord Shaftesbury's appeal for the children's usual "Jollification."

"24, Grosvenor Square, W., 2nd June, 1881.

"It cannot be possible in the course of nature that I shall, for many more years, repeat the application that I annually make on behalf of a treat in the country to the children taught in our Ragged Schools.

"I can only state, as I have frequently stated before, that such a holiday gives them the greatest pleasure, and brings with it, besides, much physical and moral benefit.

"Your obedient servant,

"To——." "Shaftesbury.

By means of this special fund last year over 2,000 of the poorest of our Ragged School children spent a day away from their every-day surroundings.

Contributions will be most thankfully acknowledged by Mr. J. Kirk, Secretary, Ragged School Union, Exeter Hall, London.

Notices of Books.

The Congregational Hymnal; or, Book of Praise for Children. (London: Hodder and Stoughton.) Pearl: double columns, 16mo, cloth limp, price 4d. Nonpareil: royal 32mo, cloth limp, flush, price 6d. Bourgeois: 18mo, stiff cloth, price 9d.

The wish expressed in the Preface by the Committee of the Congregational Union, "that this new hymn book for children may be found serviceable in promoting, both in families and in Sunday Schools, an earnest and healthy Christian life among the young," is one that deserves to be universally seconded by parents and superintendents. To effect this end in families and schools the hymns should be not only sung, but committed to memory. Let a few hymns be selected from each division. If the child be intelligent or emotional, let it exercise its choice. The editor assures us that this hymn book has this one merit at least—unhappily, the rarest of all merits in hymn books—"that of adhering rigidly in every case to the text of each hymn as written by its author." This literary integrity of itself gives to this comprehensive collection of hymns a pre-eminent claim to Christian regard.

The Sunday School Desk and Teachers' Guide. By Thomas Heath, Sunday School Superintendent, Plymouth.

A useful serial, consisting of eight pages. The subjects treated and topics discussed are varied. The remarks are pertinent and brief. The writers should remember that children have imaginations.

Our Study Meeting. By the Rev. J. H. Wright. (Hodder and Stoughton.) Price 2s. 6d.

This book arrived too late for such a notice as it deserves. It is a searching inquiry into a subject bristling with difficulties to the mere intellect—viz., "The Offering up of Isaac." The theme is presented in the form of a dialogue, skilfully conducted, which takes place on the occasion of the Sunday School Teacher's Weekly Study Meeting. The book is interesting, amusing, and instructive, and deserves a place in the teacher's library.

Notices of Meetings.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GRAVESEND RAGGED SCHOOL.

On Monday evening, March 21, the annual meeting on behalf of this valuable institution was held in the Assembly Rooms, Gravesend. Over the platform were suspended the flags presented to the school by Colonel Gordon, and also the flags of the school, whilst a considerable number of the scholars occupied a gallery erected near the platform, and during the evening sang several hymns, being accompanied on the harmonium by Miss Burles. The Mayor (Mark Martin, Esq.) occupied the chair, and was supported on the platform by the Rev. James Malcolmson (vicar of St. Luke's, Deptford), Pascoe Fenwick, Esq. (Winchmore Hill), G. J. Hoon (superintendent of Dalston Ragged School), Dr. Tomkins (of the Temple, London), the Revs. J. Shaw and Noah Heath, J. Elkin, Esq., J.P., Messrs. W. Box, W. G. Penman, and other gentlemen. After singing and prayer,

The Mayor said: My Christian friends,—My opinion as to Ragged Schools is that they have been the means of doing a great and noble work. They have been the means of inducing Government to start a scheme of education throughout the length and breadth of the land which will be fraught with great blessing. Had it not been for the Ragged Schools taking up the education of the waifs and strays of our streets, members of Parliament would not have been stimulated to carry that measure.

Mr. Penman (secretary) read the twenty-seventh annual report, which stated that the Ragged School had not yet become extinct, nor had the need for its agency passed away. There were plenty of rough and ragged boys and girls, and the police-court furnished abundant illustrations of drunkenness and dishonesty, whilst the Union houses told sad tales of improvidence and pauperism. The need was urgent for the employment of all the moral and spiritual influences that could possibly be brought to bear upon the children who attended the school. The Sunday School continued in active operation, afternoon and evening, the number of scholars in attendance at the present time being unusually large, there having been 260 the previous evening. The number of teachers at the Evening School was also larger than for some years past. Religious services for adults had been conducted each Sunday evening, and the attendance throughout had been very good. Weekly entertainments of a more general character had also been provided, consisting of magic lantern exhibitions, readings, recitations, vocal and instrumental music, &c., which had been highly appreciated. Another evening had been devoted to readings for elder boys, principally by the lady teachers, who had sought by the reading of attractive books to lure some of the lads from the streets, or low places of amusement. This effort had also been attended with success. Scholars' prizes were obtained by seven of the

children, who received them at the annual meeting of the Ragged School Union, in Exeter Hall, in May last, for keeping their situations, with good characters, for over twelve months. A Night School had been conducted two evenings in the week for lads over thirteen, under the superintendence of Mr. G. Willis; and a Sewing Class for girls was held weekly by the lady teachers, at which the average attendance had been 22. A Mothers' Meeting was also held on Tuesday evenings, and had proved a useful auxiliary, the average attendance being 41, as against 22 in the previous year. During the year 117 articles of clothing had been made, and £12 10s. 5d. paid for the same in weekly pence. Besides this, £4 19s. had been paid by the members into the Coal and Blanket Club. The public Soup Kitchen had been in active operation during the winter. The quantity of soup made was 6,731 quarts, whilst 3,063 dinners of soup and bread were eaten on the premises, and 5,014 dinners given to children. The Penny Bank, established in 1859, had been largely used by both parents and children, and the balance now due to depositors was £223 2s. 2d., 417 new accounts having been opened during the year. For the Christmas dinner for the poor 917 tickets were issued, entitling the holders to a good hot dinner of roast beef, plum-pudding, potatoes, a 2lb. loaf, and an ounce of tea. The inmates of the almshouses were similarly treated, and the fragments were distributed amongst 215 waifs and strays, principally from the lodging-houses.

Mr. W. Box, in presenting the balance-sheet, said that last year there was a heavy balance due to the treasurer, besides large outstanding liabilities, but they had a good meeting. An appeal was made, and funds were forthcoming, which he hoped would be the case that night. A donation of £10 had been given by the Ragged School Union.

Dr. Tomkins said he was pretty well acquainted with the world, from the Adriatic to the silver fringe of the Pacific, and he could say that boys and girls were wanted out West, whilst an intelligent American would say that every English boy and girl would be worth 4,000 dollars in the States. It seemed a sad thing to him that the Ragged School committee had had to provide 5,000 dinners for children during the winter. When he was at Yarmouth, in Nova Scotia, in 1846, there was a population of 20,000. There was a poorhouse, but no one in it. There was also a gaol, but during the six years of his stay there was no person committed to it. There were magistrates, but beyond looking after the road and other expenditure they had nothing to do. He never knew but one poor boy in Yarmouth, and his father was an Englishman and a drunkard, his mother, who discarded him, being the only profligate woman in the town. The speaker taught that boy to read and write, and he afterwards became a member of the Executive Government of Halifax, Nova Scotia. He (Dr. Tomkins) advocated the sending out of the numerous children who were about our streets to distant parts of the earth where there was room for them.

Mr. Fenwick said there had been

many changes in the method of Ragged School work since he was in Gravesend, but the same object was kept in view—the moral, social, and religious welfare of the poor. Great efforts were now being made to instil habits of providence and thrift into the people, in whose way great facilities were now placed for saving any sum from a postage-stamp to a £10 note. For twenty-seven years that institution had been doing the same work which was now exercising the attention of the highest in the land. He urged the advisability of erecting cottages for labourers on a system by which, if they paid the same rent as now, they would become the property of the tenants in twenty years. He trusted they would soon see in England the same state of things as prevailed in Switzerland, where every man must have a cottage before he was allowed to marry. He concluded by seconding the resolution, and saying he should be glad to give £20 to a fund for the purpose of sending young people abroad.

The motion was then put, and carried unanimously.

The Rev. J. Malcolmson moved the next resolution.

Mr. G. J. Hoon seconded it, observing that he was a stranger to the audience, but not to Ragged School work. He should be glad to hear of the revival of the Bible Mission, which had been dropped for want of funds, feeling assured that if the committee made an appeal to the public on that subject, hearts and purses would be opened, and money would come in response.

The resolution was then carried. Several other gentlemen gave interesting addresses.

HATFIELD STREET RAGGED SCHOOL AND MISSION.

The twenty-third annual meeting of the friends and supporters of this institution was held on Monday, April 11, in the rooms of the Mission, Hatfield Street, Goswell Road. Mr. W. Morley was to have presided, but in consequence of his inability to do so, Mr. Beament occupied the chair. The meeting commenced with singing and prayer, after which Mr. J. C. Page (hon. secretary) read the annual report, from which it appeared that, although the number of children in the neighbourhood had greatly decreased, owing to the demolition of property, the number of children attending the schools was much the same. The committee were very grateful that they had been able to pay all expenses, and still had a small balance in hand. With regard to the establishment of Board Schools, Mr. Page quoted the words of Mr. McCullagh Torrens, M.P., to show that Ragged Schools were needed as much now as ever. If the religious education of the children were to be left with the School Board authorities, they would come poorly off. The Sunday Ragged School was attended, on an average, by about 225 children. The elder boys and girls had been the most difficult class to keep. Several instances of good which had resulted from the teaching were given. The Sewing Classes for girls had been attended by about eighty girls in the winter, and between forty and sixty in the summer. The Gospel Meetings had been well attended. Mission Services for children had been held during each week, and had been attended by between thirty

and forty children. The Penny Bank had been the means of securing the saving of £6 11s. 9d. to the poor children, which the committee encouraged by giving a small interest. The balance now in hand amounted to £5 7s. 5d. The Band of Hope Society had about thirty names on the roll. The Adult Temperance Society had been doing good work. Upwards of sixty had signed the pledge during the year. If nothing else had been done by the society, it had been a strong protest against the evils of intemperance. Winter and summer treats had been given to the children. Night Schools for reading and writing had been conducted. The dinners to destitute children during the winter had been a boon to many hundreds of little ones, as had also the soup kitchen to the elder poor; 2,990 dinners and 1,480 quarts of soup had been served. There was an excellent library used by the poor, and three city missionaries were employed in the locality. Mr. R. D. Hilton, the treasurer, announced that the receipts from all sources during the past year amounted to £197 7s. 8d.; and after the payment of disbursements there remained a balance of £17 9s. 8d. Altogether 16,000 persons had been benefited, at an outlay of about £200. The meeting was addressed by Messrs. Hawkins, Drayton, Beadell, Beament, Page, and R. J. Curtis, of the Ragged School Union.

MAIDA HILL INDUSTRIAL AND RAGGED SCHOOLS.

The annual meeting in connection with the Industrial and Ragged Schools and Home for Working Boys, North Street, Maida Hill, was held on Tuesday evening, April 26, in the infant schoolroom, Richmond Street, Edgware Road, under the chairmanship of Major-General Lowry, C.B. There was a large attendance. There were present a number of older boys, now growing into young men, who have been in situations for various periods, and who were present to receive prizes for having kept their situations and maintained good characters. The chairman was supported on the platform by the Rev. J. G. Tanner, M.A., the president of the institution, Rev. G. Despard, M.A., of Holy Trinity, Kilburn, Mr. John Kirk, Mr. Hornsby Wright, Major Deane, Mr. H. Tillesley (hon. treasurer), Mr. G. H. Dryer, the hon. secretary, Mr. W. Amor, the esteemed superintendent of the home, and others.

The chairman spoke in high terms of admiration of the work carried on at the Home under the superintendence of Mr. Amor. A Home of that kind, conducted by a gentleman of so large and loving a heart as Mr. Amor, must be a blessing to the neighbourhood in which it was situate.

The Hon. Secretary here read the report, which stated that the past year had been one of ordinary and quiet, steady work. The committee expressed their joy at being able to retain the services of Mr. Amor as superintendent. In the Industrial Home and Lodging-house for Working Boys there had been an average of 31 inmates during the year. The health of the boys of the Home had been very good, no case of serious illness having occurred. The following are the numbers who have been admitted to the Refuge and Indus-

trial Class:—561 have had situations found for them in this country, 43 have entered the army, 80 the navy and merchant service, 25 have emigrated, 218 have returned to their friends, obtained situations for themselves, or left of their own accord; 31 are still in the institution; total 958, March, 1881. The number of boys and girls in the Sunday Evening Ragged School is about 300. The average attendance at the Monday Evening Singing Class was about thirty. There were 119 depositors in the Provident Bank during the past year.

OGLE MEWS RAGGED SCHOOL.

The thirty-seventh annual meeting of this institution in Marylebone was held on Tuesday evening, April 26. The Lord Mayor presided, and was supported by Mr. Alderman and Sheriff Fowler, M.P., Mr. Sheriff Waterlow, Alderman Sir R. W. Carden, M.P., the Rev. Prebendary Cadman, M.A., and many ladies and gentlemen.

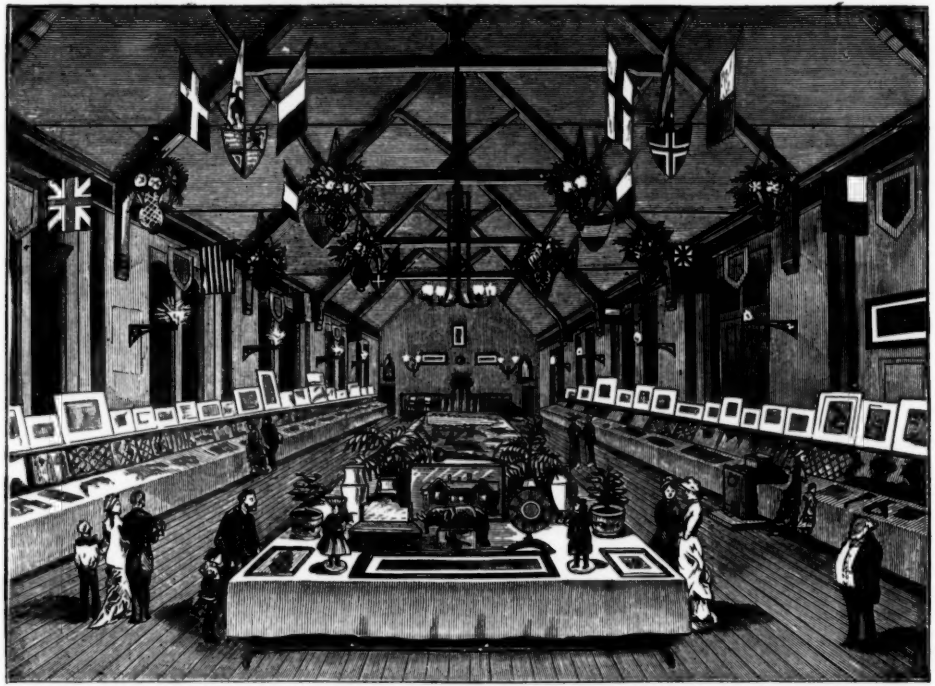
The report was read by the secretary, Mr. F. Pitts. The balance-sheet showed that the receipts amounted to £365, and there was a balance of £18 due to the treasurer.

The Lord Mayor, in addressing the meeting, said he had been much struck with the large number of agencies which were in operation in connection with this institution, and he was truly grateful to Sir Robert Carden for having invited him to come there. Ragged School work was a movement which he had always admired. There were two names which had been conspicuous in connection with this great mission — he referred to Lord Shaftesbury and the Rev. Dr. Guthrie. The first had performed his part in England, while the latter had been engaged in Scotland. He (the speaker) could well remember when the first Ragged School was opened, some forty years ago; and when he first came to London he took the opportunity of visiting the school at Field Lane. There he saw a young lady, the daughter of an eminent barrister, teaching a class of rough boys, and while in conversation with that lady he discovered that she had been able to completely change the character of a very unpromising lad, who had been taken from one of the lowest dens of the locality, and who the next day was to be the recipient of a prize at Exeter Hall. He wished the movement every success, and trusted that God would continue to smile upon it.

Mr. Alderman and Sheriff Fowler moved the adoption of the report. The Rev. Prebendary Cadman seconded the resolution, and in doing so thanked the Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs for having honoured the meeting with their presence. The resolution was passed unanimously.

Mr. Sheriff Waterlow moved the next resolution, and the Rev. W. R. Mowll seconded it.

Alderman Sir R. W. Carden, M.P., in moving a vote of thanks to the Lord Mayor, referred to the establishment of these schools, now some twenty years ago. At that time there was great opposition to this movement, and, much to the surprise of a good many people, at the solicitation of the speaker the Duke of Portland granted the lease of these premises for seventy years, and gave a donation to start with.



EXHIBITION OF SCHOLARS' WORK AT THE KING EDWARD RAGGED SCHOOLS, SPITALFIELDS.